

COMPANY A, 3D RECON BN

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

1stSgt's Corner 2

This Month in... 2

Sound Off!!! 3

Feature Story 4

Special points of interest:

- Never Forget
- Promotions
- Congratulations
- Website update

COMMANDING OFFICER'S HEADLINES

December has been a busy month for Alpha Company in the Al Anbar Province. Our brothers in Bravo Company have been working in a different area of operations (AO), so your Marines and sailors have been doing the work of two companies as the operational tempo has been extremely high. They have managed to do it, however, like they do everything else, by taking it in stride with just a few sarcastic comments and a smile, anything to keep humor at the forefront. Their efforts have received the praise of the Regimental Commander and his staff.

Although this month has been busy, we have found the time to reflect on those things which are important to us: friends, family, and as much holiday spirit as one can muster here in Iraq. We have been overwhelmed with the gifts, cookies, coffee mugs, stockings, and other holiday greetings that all of you have sent to us. It's reassuring regardless of political affiliation that so many people support the Marines and sailors of this company and the battalion. We understand that it is hard this time of year to be away from loved ones and family, but also understand that they have given each other the next best thing, which is the extended family of their platoons and the company.



As we move into the New Year, we look forward to upcoming missions and getting the job done. We ask that your thoughts and prayers are with the men of this company and those that have left our company in the past few months: Sgt Edwards, Sgt Jimma, Cpl Bartlome, Cpl Fleming, Cpl Pappas, and those whom we will never forget Cpl Powell, Cpl Galvan, and 1stLt Krissoff.

Semper Fidelis.

Christmas Stockings lined the hallways of 3d Reconnaissance Battalion Forward.

"Some people spend an entire lifetime wondering if they made a difference in the world. But, the Marines don't have that problem."

Ronald Reagan, President of the United States; 1985

COMPANY 1STSGT'S CORNER

Another month has gone by, and as we wish each other, our families and friends a Merry Christmas we find that the New Year is here. One of the things that I have done at the end of each year is take the time to reflect on what the past year has brought to me as a Marine and for my own family.

The first thoughts I had when I went to reflect on 2006 were of the Marines that have made the ultimate sacrifice and those Marines that I have grown close to that have been wounded in action since we have been here in Iraq.

I spent some time reflecting on where I have come over the past year, and how much I have learned since working with the Marines of 3d Recon. I spent the majority of 2006 deployed away from my family and friends in Okinawa and thought about how much I missed being able to spend time with my kids.

There has never been a moment that I have spent thinking about what could have been, or how I could have done something differently. Instead, I focus on all of the good times I have had. Whether it was with my wife and kids at the beach, or friends I have around the world. I thought about the times spent with the Marines in Mojave Viper and our more recent times here in the FIRM bases and aboard Camp Fallujah.

For me this past year has brought me many things for which I am grateful. I have made some



Sunset behind a M240G Machine Gun positioned in an Observation Post.

new friends, spent quality time with my family, and trained and come to combat with some of the best Marines in the Corps. 2006 was a good year. Now it is time to look for what 2007 and the future will bring. I am sure there will be some rough times and plenty of good times to be had, but no matter what this new year brings I know that I will do my best to continue to grow, learn, have fun, and make the most of everything that I do.

I hope everyone has a great outlook for 2007, Happy New Year to you all.
1stSgt Chris C. Calhoun

“The United States Marine Corps, with its fiercely proud tradition of excellence in combat, its hallowed rituals, and its unbending code of honor, is part of the fabric of American myth.”

Thomas E. Ricks;
Making the Corps,
1997

THIS MONTH IN COMPANY A...

HOLIDAY SEASON IN IRAQ

As our schedule here remains fast paced and ever fluent, we began to see and feel the effects of this holiday season spent away from our families and friends. During the month of December we conducted numerous Operations in the Al Anbar Province. Marines from the Company completed another successful month of counter-insurgency operations and numerous combat patrols throughout our area of operations.

After each Operation it was great to come back to mail waiting to be opened. The continued support from not only our Families and Friends, but from the countless American supporters has been extraordinary.

The Battalion Chaplain has had a coffee shop, Eden's Nectar, or as some Marines call it 'God-bucks', running out of his office since just after we arrived. We have had several different coffee vendors deliver Holiday season flavored coffee, and many other supporters send gifts and food items to go with the coffee.

As busy as the month has been, I believe each Marine has taken the time to reflect on the past year. To think about the choices they made in order to become a Marine, and further to become a Reconnaissance Marine.

We all continue to think about our loved ones back home, and reflect on the Marines that are no longer with us. As we face this New Year we will look forward to our arrival in Okinawa, but continue to focus on mission accomplishment here in Iraq.

1stSgt C



SOUND OFF!!!

The Marine's Prayer

Almighty Father, whose command is over all and whose love never fails, make me aware of thy presence and obedient to thy will. Keep me true to my best self, guarding me against dishonesty in purpose and deed and helping me to live so that I can face my fellow Marines, my loved ones, and Thee without shame or fear.

Protect my family. Give me the will to do the work of a Marine and to accept my share of responsibilities with vigor and enthusiasm. Grant me the courage to be proficient in my daily performance. Keep me loyal and faithful to my superiors and to the duties my Country and the Marines Corps have entrusted to me. Help me to wear my uniform with dignity, and let it remind me daily of the traditions which I must uphold.

If I am inclined to doubt, steady my faith; if I am tempted, make me strong to resist; if I should miss the mark, give me courage to try again.

Guide me with the light of truth and grant me wisdom by which I may understand the answer to my prayer.

WE WILL NEVER
FORGET



CPL KYLE W. POWELL
KIA 4 NOV 2006



CPL JOSE A. GALVAN
KIA 4 NOV 2006



1STLT NATHAN A. KRISOFF
KIA 9 DEC 2006

WOUNDED IN ACTION



CPL DUSTIN FLEMING
WIA 17 OCT 2006

SGT ROBERT WOLF
WIA 4 NOV 2006

SGT WILLIAM EDWARDS
WIA 9 DEC 2006

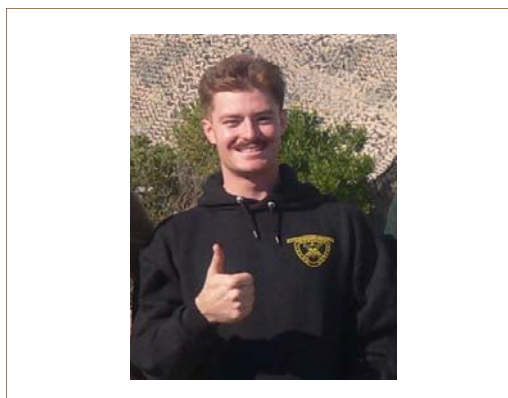
CPL PAUL BARTLOME
WIA 17 OCT 2006

SGT BINYAM JIMMA
WIA 24 NOV 2006

CPL JOSH PAPPAS
WIA 9 DEC 2006

SETTING UP OPS IN THE URBAN FIELD

Happy Holidays everyone! My name is Corporal Bill Kessler and I'm in Alpha Company First Platoon. I was told that some of you out there liked reading stories from the "front lines", so I was asked to write an article for all of you interested. This is about how my team and I established one of the Companies first Observation Posts (OP) in an inhabited Iraqi house. We had been taking grenade attacks on our firm base in the Al Anbar Province, so my team, plus another, pushed out one night from our position to see if we could get eyes on our firm base from another angle. We got to our objective house and immediately began setting up posts on the North and South with our essential equipment. This entailed turning off all the lights and closing the curtains so that you could only look through a crack. We set up another guy on the house door with a Squad Automatic Weapon (SAW) who's sole purpose was to make sure nothing came through it. As we continued to get into position, other members of the platoon were establishing security in surrounding areas to ensure that we were not compromised. After things were settled our interpreter and team leader began discussing with the family of the house as to why we had occupied their home. Pretty much, nobody was coming in or going out without our express permission, and absolutely nobody was to talk about what was going on. This ended up being pretty easy, because the family was more afraid of terrorists finding out that they had harbored coalition forces than anything else! The family slept together that night and the following morning, the man's sons started getting inter-



Corporal Bill Kessler, Team Three, First Platoon,
Company A, 3d Recon BN

ested in their "guests." The family was very nice, and those that weren't on watch at the time were found either discussing politics with the man of the house (with the interpreter's help of course) or playing around with his kids. We showed them some of our gear and such, but the thing that they loved the most was our chemical lights (or Chemlites)! To them, they were the treasure they'd always dreamed about! That evening the wife and daughter even cooked enough food for all of us to enjoy. A typical meal in Iraq consists of flat bread, rice, vegetables, and chicken. When nightfall came again, my team packed it all up and we pushed back out to our firm base where we debriefed everything we had observed and experienced. We were successful in not being compromised and we also think that it was good for human relations purposes. My team paved the way for many more future OPs.

Cpl. Kessler



*"We set up another guy
on the house door with a
Squad Automatic
Weapon (SAW) who's
sole purpose was to make
sure nothing came
through it."*



United States
Marine Corps

3d Recon Bn, A Co
Unit 36182
FPO AP 96602-6182

Phone: DSN 315-3405-418
Fax: None
Email: chris.calhoun@gcemnf-
wiraq.usmc.mil

"Semper Fidelis"

PROMOTIONS

January

PAUL DASHIELL promoted to the rank of **SERGEANT**
BRYAN ERNST promoted to the rank of **SERGEANT**
NATHAN HRUSKA promoted to the rank of **SERGEANT**
GARY JOHNSTON promoted to the rank of **SERGEANT**

CONGRATULATIONS TO...

CAPTAIN ZACHARY & MICHELLE MARTIN on the birth of
their son RANSOM
SERGEANT ROBERT WOLF for your recent marriage to former
Ms. HEATHER TANNER
STAFF SERGEANT ERIK & TERESA TONEY they are expecting
a daughter in May

www.3div.usmc.mil/sections/3recon.asp

